

# RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL OF WELLS.

## Annual Report of the Medical Officer of Health FOR THE YEAR 1910.

STREET, SOMERSET,  
FEBRUARY 3RD, 1911.

To the Rural District Council of Wells.

MR. CHAIRMAN AND GENTLEMEN,

I have the honour to submit my Report for the year ending December 31st, 1910.

Area.	58045 Acres.
Population.	Census 1901—10,767. Estimated to middle of 1910 at 10,184.
Geology.	Dolomitic conglomerate at Chewton Mendip and Westbury; mountain limestone at Priddy; red marl at Dinder, North Wootton, and Rodney Stoke; red marl and river gravel at Wookey; lower lias at West Pennard, Baltonsborough, Butleigh, and Walton; alluvium and peat at Glastonbury Moor.
Birth Rate.	215 births (117 males, 98 females) registered: giving a birth rate of 21.1 per 1,000 per annum. Ten of the births were illegitimate (8 males, 2 females).
Death Rate.	192 deaths registered (93 males, 99 females), giving a death rate of 18.8 per 1000 per annum. Excluding 81 deaths registered, of non-residents, from Public Institutions in the district, the corrected death rate for the Rural District is 10.8 per 1000 per annum.
Zymotic Death Rate.	One death registered from zymotic disease, giving a zymotic rate of 0.09 per 1000 living.
Infant Mortality.	The infant mortality <i>per 1000 births</i> is 37.6—8 deaths under one year being registered.

### FOR THE YEAR 1909.

Birth rate	...	per 1000 living	...	23.02
Death rate	...	" "	...	22.2
Corrected death rate	...	" "	...	12.7
Zymotic death rate	...	" "	...	0.29
Infant mortality per 1000 births	...	...	...	63.5

### AGES TABLE OF DEATHS:

Under 1 year	there were	8 deaths
1 and under 5 years	" "	4 "
5 " " 15 "	" "	3 "
15 " " 25 "	" "	7 "
25 " " 65 "	" "	79 "
65 and upwards	" "	91 "

The BIRTHS in the District were distributed as follows:—

Wells Out	...	64	North Wootton	...	6
Rodney Stoke	...	15	Meare	...	26
Wookey	...	25	Walton	...	8
Priddy	...	8	Butleigh	...	6
Chewton Mendip	...	17	West Pennard	...	8
Dinder	...	1	Baltonsborough	...	11
Westbury	...	10	Sharpham	...	4
Godney	...	6			

The DEATHS were distributed in the following districts:—

Wells Out	...	22	Baltonsborough	...	11
Westbury	...	4	Butleigh	...	9
Rodney Stoke	...	13	Meare	...	10
Wookey	...	11	West Pennard	...	7
Priddy	...	0	Walton	...	12
Chewton Mendip	...	9	Sharpham	...	0
Dinder	...	1	North Wootton	...	1
Godney	...	3	Asylum	...	79

CAUSES OF DEATH during the year:—

Scarlet Fever	...	...	1	Alcoholism	...	...	...	}	3
Epidemic Influenza	...	...	1	Cirrhosis of Liver	...	...	...		
Phthisis	...	...	...	Premature Birth	...	...	...	}	2
Pulmonary Tuberculosis	...	...	17	Diseases and Accidents of Par-	...	...	...		
Other Tubercular Diseases	...	...	3	turition	...	...	...	}	1
Cancer	...	...	...	Heart Diseases	...	...	...		
Malignant Disease	...	...	12	Accidents	...	...	...	}	27
Bronchitis	...	...	15	Suicide	...	...	...		
Pneumonia	...	...	7	Other Septic Diseases...	...	...	...	}	4
All other Causes	...	...	95						

Of the INFANT MORTALITY:—

2 were under 1 week	1 from 4 to 5 months
2 from 1 to 2 months	1 „ 5 „ 6 „
1 „ 2 „ 3 „	1 „ 6 „ 7 „

Butleigh, Chewton Mendip, Dinder, Priddy, Rodney Stoke, Godney, Part of Polsham, West Pennard, Wookey Hole, Baltonsborough, Horrington, and Sharp-ham (shortly to be completed) have an ample supply of good water; private sup-plies—together with the Glastonbury, Street, and Shepton Mallet Council's supplies—contributing respectively their portions to several of the villages.

North Wootton. Negotiations are in progress for the purchase of a spring by the R.D. Council for the supply of this district.

Meare and Westhay. As I have previously reported, this district is dependent mostly on shallow wells and in some instances on the river. The possibility of pol-lution, and in dry weather the shortage of the supply, and the dependence on the river, also the dilapidated state of some of the wells, are unsatisfactory features of the supply of this district.

The supply for the outlying part of the districts, e.g., Ashcott Corner, which is dependent either on the ditches or the rhine, is also unsatisfactory.

On the initiative of the County M.O.H., I have submitted samples of water from this district to the County Analyst, on whose report depends what action the R.D. Council may take in the matter.

It is only fair to state that only two cases of notifiable disease have been re-ported from this district during the year, viz., Scarlet Fever.

Part of the Westbury district is well supplied, and the districts of Wookey and Henton have fairly good supplies of well water.

Walton is dependent on wells, which in dry weather soon become exhausted. This has not been felt so much during the last two years owing to the rainy seasons we have had. With the Street main so near, an extension therefrom would be a great boon to many houses in this district. To this district the attention of the Council has also been drawn by the County M.O. of Health.

I have examined a number of samples of well water during the year.

The district has no general system of drainage; at Priddy, Henton, Easton, Westbury, and Horrington there are no drains. At Chewton Mendip there is a sewer with house drains connected—discharging into the river. At Draycott and Rodney Stoke there are sewers and open drains discharging into the moors. Dinder has a small length of sewer.

Meare, West Pennard, Baltonsborough, Butleigh, and Walton have sewers or drains discharging either into the river, the ditches, or on to the land.

Privies with cesspits are principally in use in the district. These, as previously reported, are naturally a source of danger from their infrequent emptying and the possibility of adjacent water supplies becoming contaminated. Where practicable, earth-closets are encouraged.

The Inspectors of Nuisances report some 12 cases of defective or dangerous privies being dealt with—also five cases of pollution of streams—during the year.

There is no regular system for the disposal of excrement in the district. The greater part is placed on the land.

The house refuse is removed by the occupiers of the different premises.

Accompanied by the Inspector of Nuisances, I have visited these Works during the year. New additional filter beds have now been completed by the Wells City Council. I trust the result will be satisfactory.



Seventeen cases of notifiable disease have been reported during the year—against 64 for the previous year—a gratifying decrease.

Fourteen cases of Scarlet Fever—10 in the Wells Out-District, 2 from Meare, 1 from Walton, and 1 from West Pennard.

Three cases of Erysipelas—1 from the Wells Out-District, 1 from Butleigh, and one from Baltonsborough.

The necessary proceedings in the case of Notifiable Diseases have been carried out by the Inspectors of Nuisances and myself.

One death from Scarlet Fever has been registered—the only death from Zymotic Disease during the year. With the scanty accommodation—especially in some of the cottages in the district—isolation is not an easy matter, and the want of an Isolation Hospital for the whole District is at times keenly felt.

One case of Pulmonary Tuberculosis under the Poor Law was notified—from Godney—during the year. No system of notification of this disease voluntary or otherwise is in operation in the district. At the suggestion of the County Medical Officer of Health, I brought the matter of disinfection of the premises where consumptives have died before the Council, but until this disease is made compulsorily notifiable they did not see their way to enforce this.

With the exception of a private Sanatorium in the district, no hospital accommodation is provided for tuberculous patients (apart from the Workhouse Infirmary) though some cases through local subscribers are sent to Sanatoria elsewhere.

At *Baltonsborough*, during the year, cases of Mumps, Whooping Cough, and Chicken Pox were reported to me from the Schools.

At *Coxley*, in September, an epidemic of Whooping Cough prevailed, the school being closed for a period.

At *Dinder*, cases of Mumps, Chicken Pox, and Whooping Cough, and one case of Scarlet Fever (residing in the Wells Out-District), occurred amongst the children attending the school.

At *Draycott*, in March, several cases of Mumps were reported.

At *Easton*, in September and October, an epidemic of Whooping Cough occurred, the school being closed for a period.

At *Meare*, in September, an epidemic of Measles occurred, the girls' and infants' department of the school being closed for a period.

At *Westbury-sub-Mendip*, in October, several cases of Whooping Cough were reported.

At *West Pennard*, cases of Mumps, Whooping Cough, one case of Scarlet Fever, and two of Measles, have occurred amongst the school children.

At *Wookey* and *Henton*, in June and July, a number of cases of Whooping Cough occurred.

At *Walton*, in January, a case of Scarlet Fever was reported, and in July one of Measles and one of Ringworm.

Several cases of Whooping Cough and two of Scarlet Fever occurred amongst children living in the Rural District who attended *Wells Schools*.

I have visited the various districts and schools during the year, and notified weekly to the County Medical Officer of Health the names of children I have excluded from school on account of these diseases.

The Medical Inspection of the children attending the schools in the district has been carried out by the Inspectors appointed by the County Council.

Visits paid with the Inspectors who continue to make a house-to-house inspection of various districts. From their annexed reports it will be seen that unsatisfactory conditions found have been reported upon and orders issued by the Council for their remedying.

Two cases of overcrowding have been dealt with. In some instances the difficulty of obtaining houses suitable to their means containing sufficient bedroom accommodation is marked, especially in those villages where houses are scarce.

Supervision is exercised over the erection of new houses, a certificate of occupation being granted by the Council only on a satisfactory report from the Inspectors.

**Isolation Hospital.**

None. The need of one at times severely felt. Two cottages at Worminster are still retained by the Rural District Council for the isolation of Small-pox should any case arise. The inaccessibility of the place, however, precludes their use for general isolation purposes.

**Disinfecting Means.**

Fumigation by Sulphur Dioxide or Formalin. Disinfectants where necessary are supplied gratuitously by the Rural District Council. All premises from which infectious diseases have been notified are afterwards disinfected by the Inspector of Nuisances.

The provision of a suitable disinfecting apparatus for clothing, bedding, &c., also of a suitable spray, would be a distinct gain to the district.

**Dairies, Cowsheds, and Milkshops.**

A register of the Dairies, Cowsheds, and Milkshops, under the Dairies, Cowsheds, and Milkshops Order of 1885, is kept. There are now 300 persons registered in this district under this Order.

Inspections of the Dairies, Cowsheds, &c., have been made by the Inspectors during the year, and in some instances the necessary alterations have been made in order to bring the premises into conformity with the regulations made by the Council with reference to their lighting, ventilation, cleansing, drainage, and water supply. In other instances—as reported by the Inspector—some of the Cowsheds are of a poor description, but some improvement has been made in their condition. Considerably more will have to be made in order to bring them into line with the Council's regulations.

These regulations also contain directions for securing the cleanliness of Milk Stores, Milk Shops and Milk Vessels used for containing milk for sale by persons following the trade of Cow-keepers or Dairymen.

The Dairy Produce of the district is very considerable, the milk supply being generally of excellent quality.

In three instances I have received from the County Medical Officer of Health notices of Tuberculosis in the udders of cows which had been examined by a London County Council Inspector. The necessary directions have been given under the Orders of 1885 and 1889, and the animals have been kept under observation by the Inspectors. Where removal from the district has taken place the necessary notice has been given to the Medical Officer of Health of the district to which the animal has been removed.

Five cases of Anthrax have been notified to me during the year, the necessary proceedings being taken by the Police, but in each case the premises are visited by the Inspector of Nuisances for the district.

**General Inspections.**

Slaughter-houses, Bake-houses, and Public Schools inspected.

No Bye-laws are in force in the district. The adoption of suitable ones would greatly enhance the control of the Council.

**Factory and Work-shops Act, 1901.**

Inspections of the various Factories, Workshops, and Home-workers' Premises have been made by the Inspectors and myself, and their sanitation, ventilation, means of escape in case of fire, and provision of suitable sanitary accommodation attended to.

Factories Inspected	...	16	Work-shops	...	50
Bakehouses	...	10	Work-places	...	89

I append Tables of Statistics, as required by the Local Government Board, together with the Reports of the Inspectors of Nuisances, to whose co-operation I am again greatly indebted.

I have the honour to be,

Mr. Chairman and Gentlemen,

Your obedient Servant,

**GEORGE W. EGLINTON.**



Pre 1

# Reports and Summary of Inspectors of Nuisances.

## No. 1 DISTRICT.

### *Inspector of Nuisances' Summary for the year ended 31st December, 1910.*

The following is a summary of the cases reported by me to the Council, and dealt with by order :—

	No. of Cases.
Dwelling houses with insufficient privy accommodation ... ..	5
Dwelling houses overcrowded ... ..	2
Dwelling houses unfit for human habitation, houses done up or closed ... ..	2
Dwelling houses closed in 1909 as unfit for human habitation, renovated and re-occupied in 1910 ... ..	1
Infected dwellings, occupiers served with notice as to isolation of patients, disinfection, &c. ... ..	13
Dwellings and clothing disinfected, as directed by the Medical Officer of Health ... ..	12
Public School premises disinfected ... ..	1
New dwelling houses erected, for which certificates of occupation have been granted by the Council ... ..	10
Dilapidated and dangerous buildings repaired ... ..	2
Dilapidated and dangerous privies repaired ... ..	10
Nuisances arising from foul and choked drains, foul accumulations, &c. ... ..	12
New drains laid, and old ones repaired ... ..	3
Slaughter houses and public schools inspected—no bye-laws in force ... ..	19
Pollution of stream dealt with ... ..	1
Sample of water submitted to the Medical Officer of Health ... ..	1
Polluted wells cleansed and protected ... ..	3
Formal notices served by the Inspector ... ..	50
Factory and Workshops Act, 1901:—There are registered in the district, 9 Factories, 27 Work- shops, 49 Workplaces, 6 Bakehouses, 4 Outworkers. Total— ... ..	95
These have all been inspected, and are in a fairly clean and satisfactory condition.	

Dairies, Cowsheds, and Milkshops Order, 1885:—There are now 169 persons registered under this order, and during the year alterations have been made in 23 cases, in order to bring the premises occupied into conformity with the regulations made by the Council.

During the year I have made a house-to-house inspection of the Parish of Dinder. In this parish there are 50 occupied houses. All cases arising from this inspection are included in the above summary.

I have also commenced a house-to-house inspection of the Parish of Chewton Mendip.

One case of Tuberculosis amongst dairy cattle reported. This case was followed up from place to place.

In addition to the above, a number of inspections have been made, in my rounds, and verbal notices given to abate nuisances.

**PHILIP WILLIAMS,** *Inspector No. 1 District.*

## No. 2 DISTRICT.

### *Inspector of Nuisances' Summary for the year ended 31st December, 1910.*

The following is a summary of cases reported to the Council, and dealt with by order :—

	No. of Cases.
Unwholesome and insufficient water supplies laid on to 46 dwellings at West Pennard and 2 dwellings at Godney ... ..	48
Defective wells: Protected from surface water pollution ... ..	2
Common sewers: Repaired and extended at Walton, West Pennard, and Meare ... ..	3
Defective drains: New ones laid and old ones repaired ... ..	11
Defective privies: Dry earth closets provided ... ..	2
Foul accumulations: Nuisances abated ... ..	13
Liquid manure tanks provided to abate nuisances ... ..	6
Animals so kept as to be a nuisance (abated) ... ..	2
Dilapidated and filthy dwellings (1 repaired, 1 closed) ... ..	2
Slaughter-houses (4), Bake-houses (4), and Public Schools (10) inspected (No Bye-Laws in force)... ..	18
Infected dwellings: Occupiers served with notices as to isolation and disinfection (disinfectants supplied) ... ..	6
Infected dwellings: Disinfected as directed by Medical Officer of Health ... ..	6
Pulmonary tuberculosis: 1 case notified and dealt with ... ..	1
Anthrax: Premises visited where animals died ... ..	2
Tubercular disease of udder in cows: Visited, notices served, and kept under observation ... ..	2
Pollution of streams: Abated by the provision of liquid manure tanks ... ..	4
Informal notices and letters thereon—85 (80 remedied and 5 under Order)... ..	85

Infectious Disease (not notifiable): As directed by the Medical Officer of Health, I have visited several dwellings and given instructions for children suffering from Infectious Disease to be kept from school.

I have on two occasions met the County Medical Officer of Health, and accompanied him on a general inspection of the Parishes of Meare and Walton. Attention has been given by me to the prevention of waste or pollution of the Council's water supplies of the district.

Dairies, Cowsheds, and Milkshops Order, 1885: Regulations are in force in the district, and 131 farm premises are registered, all of which have been inspected. Many of the cowsheds are of a poor description, but I find some improvement has been made in regard to their general cleanliness since my first inspection. Water supplies have also been laid on to several premises at West Pennard and Godney.

Factories and Workshops Act, 1901: The following are registered—7 Factories, 4 Bakehouses, 23 Workshops and 40 Workplaces. Homeworkers, 15.

These have been inspected, and are in a fairly good sanitary condition.

**EDWIN H. PADFIELD,** *Inspector No. 2 District.*

